

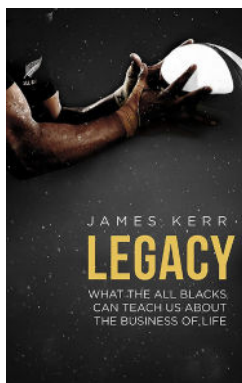


LEGACY

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THE BOOK



Legacy: What the All Blacks can teach us about the business of life

By James Kerr



INTRODUCTION

One of the world's most successful teams comes from one of the world's smallest and most remote countries. The All Blacks, New Zealand's national rugby union team, has a 77 per cent winning record in test match rugby, and is the only international men's side to have secured more wins than losses against every opponent. Since their international debut in 1903, they have played test matches against 19 nations, of which 12 have never won a game against them. What makes this team so great? It has nothing to do with luck. Their reputation as champions hasn't come about through physical strength or agility alone. In the book *Legacy*, James Kerr uncovers the strategies and lessons behind the success of the legendary All Blacks. Every lesson can be applied to every team, be it on the field, in the office or in the classroom. This book shares the importance of humility, working as a team, staying authentic and making sacrifices to achieve your goals. It describes how players on the world-stage stay in the 'blue zone' when the pressure is on and reiterates that true champions are forged in the practice ring, not on the field. Throughout the chapters, this inspiring book shares the steps to make a mark in any industry and leave a Legacy of your own. Take a look at the following summary for the key lessons contained in the publication.



5 BEST QUOTES

"Humility does not mean weakness, but its opposite. Leaders with mana understand the strength of humility. It allows them to connect with their deepest values and the wider world."

"The fight is won or lost," says Muhammad Ali, "far away from witnesses – behind the lines, in the gym, and out there on the road, well before I dance under the lights."

"Vision without action is a dream. Action without vision is a nightmare."

"No one is bigger than the team and individual brilliance does not automatically lead to outstanding results. One selfish mindset will infect a collective culture."

"This questioning is as applicable to business as it is to rugby. No one person has all the answers, but asking questions challenges the status quo, helps connect with core values and beliefs, and is a catalyst for individual improvement. After all, the better the questions we ask, the better the answers we get."



14 LESSONS

1. CHARACTER

The first chapter of Legacy shares that even when they win a match, the All Blacks tidy up after themselves before they leave their locker room. By 'sweeping the sheds', they demonstrate personal discipline stay aligned with the belief that strong character triumphs over talent. As the book shares, "Character is essential to individuals, and their cumulative character is the backbone of your winning team. Create the highest possible operating standards, develop the character of your players, develop the culture of your team and the score takes care of itself."

Team members need to be able to depend on each other. Having good character allows them to do so. For leaders, the challenge is to design and create an environment that continually drives the high-performance behaviours needed for success.

2. ADAPT

When things aren't going well, you need a strategy for change. This requires a clear case for change, a compelling picture of the future, a sustained capability for change and a credible plan to execute. It is natural to find yourself or your team on top of the world one minute and falling off the other side the next but the role of the leader is to know when to reinvent and how to do it. What's key is to keep changing the game, even when you're at the top of your game, and to maintain momentum while you do it. You either adapt or you lose. The team that thrives is able to act quickly and decisively to seize competitive advantage; adjusting and readjusting along the way.

3. PURPOSE

Six words have defined the efforts of the All Blacks for close to a decade: Better People Make Better All Blacks. To promote this, each individual in the team is encouraged to have a sense of purpose. In business, a bigger purpose drives success. The coffee company Starbucks, for example, was created with the purpose of building a company where health cover for employees is standard. Apple's purpose has been to do the greatest things possible, or even a little greater. "Reason leads to conclusions," says Canadian Neurologist Donald Calne, "Emotion leads to action." If you want higher performance, begin with a higher purpose.

4. RESPONSIBILITY

"Leaders don't create followers. They create more leaders" - Tom Peters

In chapter four, Legacy refers to the organisation Teenage Kicks in Hackney, London. A resident, frustrated with petty crime, asked the police what they were going to do about it. The police replied, "What are you going to do about it?". The resulting youth football league turned gangs into teams and created a system which the area's disaffected youth had something to feel responsible for. Gang leaders became managers, who nominated Captains. Captains brought teams together and every team had the responsibility of turning up to the game on time. Across the All Blacks, senior players have a portfolio of responsibilities. This includes educating younger members about the expectations of the team.



14 LESSONS

5. LEARN

Success is modest improvement, consistently done, and the best players in the world always practice more than they play. Instead of striving for excellence, focus your team on constant improvement and constant change. No matter who you are in charge of, consider your role as leader to include teaching and create a structure which helps connect vision with action. This chapter also highlights the concept of 'marginal gains'. This idea delivers champions by making small improvements add up to the biggest ones. Other teams have referred to this as 'inches' or 'tenths'. Shave a tenth of a second off every lap and you will find yourself a lot closer to first place.

6. WHĀNAU

"The strength of the wolf is in the pack."

The Māori concept of Whānau refers to our family, friends, tribe or team. It is symbolised by a spearhead, the same shape a flock of birds takes in flight. For whānau to function well, everyone must move towards the same point and flow together more frequently than they are in opposition. Put simply, this can be translated to mean 'No D*ckheads'. Instead of a quest for individual glory, the All Blacks make sacrifices so they can play together, and better, as a team.

6. SHAME AND EMPATHY

Shame is the 'never good enough' emotion. It makes us feel unworthy of connection, belonging or love. This feeling is universal but many of us fail to talk about it, which leads to it controlling our lives. As a leader, you can build resilience in yourself and your team by recognising shame and understanding its triggers, practising critical awareness, reaching out when we feel alone and 'speaking shame'. Empathy recognises shame and acts as a connecting, trust-building tool. Empathy is saying, "I know that feeling and it sucks", or "You're not alone". It doesn't mean trying to immediately solve someone's problems, but instead letting your friend or colleague know you understand what they are going through.

7. EXPECTATIONS

Aim for the highest cloud. The All Blacks are so successful that they are expected to win every Test. Without this expectation, would they reach the standards they do? When expectations come from within, they are an internal benchmark which sets the great apart from the good. By setting even the most unrealistic self-expectation, 'The aversion to the failure of not reaching the goal is much stronger even than the desire to reach it.' Inspiring leaders use bold, unrealistic goals to lift their game, and the power of storytelling to 'Sing their world into existence.'



14 LESSONS

8. PREPARATION

Aussie cricketer Don Bradman provides inspiration here. As a young boy, he practised with a cricket stump for a bat and a golf ball in his backyard for hours on end before going on to achieve that famous 99.94 batting average. The idea is that the training, when it comes to making decisions, should be harder than the game. The way Bradman practised against a corrugated fence was actually more challenging than facing a bowler in many ways. As this chapter explains, the intensity of preparation and training to win conditions the brain and body to perform under pressure. It lets peak performance become automatic and develops the mindset to win.

9. PRESSURE

We all face pressure but we respond to it differently. With a 'red head', you will choke under pressure. The situation has diverted your attention from what you need to do and you cannot make the right decisions. Having a 'blue head' in a pressure-filled situation means you have awareness of what's around you and can execute accurately. You are clear, you adapt and you overcome. We respond the right way to pressure when we know what causes us to rely on emotion and instinct rather than thought. Staying aware of the situation, controlling our attention and staying in the present are key. Great players, no matter what the game, use maps, mantras and anchors to navigate through highly pressurised situations. They bring themselves back to the moment and triumph in spite of the conditions around them.

10. AUTHENTICITY

Legacy uses the analogy of a bridge: secure because it is made of several different planks. You need more than your sport or profession, you need personal skills, family and friends. Harvard Business School Professor Bill George argues the essence of a great leader is about "Being genuine, real and true to who you are." This approach is reflected by the All Blacks. Honesty and integrity are the cornerstones of authenticity. There is also the understanding of accountability, meaning players commit to doing what they say they will, even if it means not being late for the bus.

Honesty = Integrity = Authenticity = Resilience = Performance.

11. SACRIFICE

Champions do extra. What do you have to offer your team? More importantly, what are you prepared to sacrifice? Does it mean being first to arrive at the gym and last to leave? Does it mean that extra rep, circuit or extra ten minutes of training? As the saying goes, 'There are no crowds lining the extra mile'. From authors to sports stars, those who find success strive for excellence in all areas and sacrifice what they must to make the right things happen.



14 LESSONS

12. LANGUAGE

Words start revolutions. Think of any brand. It has a slogan to inspire and excite its followers.

Just Do It.
Nothing is Impossible.
Think.
Invent.

Slogans capture character in a sentence and change minds with a turn of phrase. The best teams harness the powers of mottos and mantras to reflect, remind, reinforce and reinvigorate their ethos, every day.

13. RITUAL

The All Blacks are famous for their haka. Many people think this traditional pre-game match is performed so the team can intimidate their enemies and they are right. But beyond this, the All Blacks use the haka to 'Reconnect with their fundamental purpose, to connect to the core of their culture, to summon their ancestors up from the earth and to bond with one another.' Ritual can be a tool which brings a stronger sense of personal meaning and belonging to an organisation. It represents a pre-verbal language and has the powerful effect of helping us to embody our belief systems.

14. WHAKAPAPA

We think of our ancestors, but do we think of ourselves as ancestors? The term Legacy refers to what we leave behind. Our Whakapapa is our genealogy; our place in the ascending order of all living things. What is important is to inherit the values of our tribe, live to the standard and pass it on to the next person down the chain. Even if your team is brand new, you can look to create examples set by others who can before you. Seek to uphold their standards in your quest to leave your mark on the world for the right reasons, and find reasons to exist beyond profit or high-scores alone.



ACTION STEPS

While talent is important, it doesn't create champions.

If you are a leader, teacher or even part of a team and you want to leave a lasting Legacy, the actions you must take include:

- Considering the extra things you can do to improve your discipline and standards
- Being prepared to work harder in the leadup to competition than anyone else
- Defining your values, your purpose and the reason behind what you do
- Continually aiming for the highest cloud

Remember, Better people make better All Blacks, and better people make better leaders.

**1 KEY TAKEAWAY**

The idea that champions do extra shines through in every chapter of this book.

Whether it is showing humility by staying back to sweep the floors, establishing a culture of leading by example or practising that little bit more than the other team, champions push themselves in every area.

The lessons of the All Blacks can inspire almost every classroom, team or workplace. The idea of working together with a shared goal and purpose, expecting excellence and going the extra mile in all areas can be applied to any situation for results which will leave a lasting Legacy.



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Read the full book

Legacy

by James Kerr

What the All Blacks teach about character, humility, and standards.

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